

exposing the polishing pad or the substrate surface to an inhibitor after polishing at the second removal rate; and
recirculating the chemical agent.

59. (New) A method of planarizing a wafer surface, comprising:
a step for removing a portion of a copper containing material at a first removal rate; and
a step for selectively removing a copper containing material at a second removal rate less than the first removal rate.

60. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein chemical mechanical polishing (CMP) the wafer to reduce the copper or copper alloy layer at a first removal rate to a thickness of about 500Å to about 3,000 Å and CMP the wafer to remove the copper or copper alloy layer at a second removal rate, less than the first removal rate, stopping on the barrier layer comprise a computer-readable medium bearing instructions for planarizing the wafer surface by a chemical mechanical (CMP) system when said instructions are arranged and executed by one or more processors connected to the chemical mechanical (CMP) system.

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated February 23, 2001, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on March 23, 2001. Please enter the following amendments and reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121:

- I. Claims 1-15, drawn to a method for CMP polishing a via structure, classified in class 438, subclass 692(+)
- II. Claims 16-29, drawn to a computer readable storage medium, classified in class 349, subclass 17 (+).

The Examiner asserts that Groups I and II are restricted on grounds that the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). The Examiner states that the process as claimed can be practiced by hand without the use of a computer readable storage medium.

Applicants elect claims 30-44 corresponding to Group I, claims 1-15, with traverse. New claim 59 generically recites the subject matter of claim 30 corresponding to claim 1 of Group I and claim 45 corresponding to claim 16 of Group II, and restriction of the corresponding claims to Group I and Group II from claim 59 would be improper if claim 59 is allowable. Further, The computer readable medium claims corresponding to Group II is drawn to the process for removing material from a substrate surface and is therefore not properly restricted. Claim 60 is drawn to the elected method using a computer readable medium and is not properly restricted. Accordingly, Applicants request modification of the restriction requirement to permit prosecution of claims 30-60.

Respectfully submitted,



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